

# FACT SHEET | Rail Safety Investments

## *2016 Budget for a Better Minnesota*

Every day, trains carrying oil and other hazardous materials pass through Minnesota. These trains present real risks to public safety and our natural resources. That is why Governor Dayton and Lt. Governor Smith's budget would strengthen Minnesota's ability to prevent disasters, and respond quickly and effectively if they do occur. By improving safety precautions and disaster preparedness, these efforts would improve the safety of Minnesotans living near railroads carrying hazardous materials.

### Increased Rail Traffic Poses Safety Risks

- **Extensive Rail Network** – Minnesota has 4,444 rail route miles used by twenty different railroads, which annually move more than one trillion tons of freight through the state. Minnesota's share of rail transportation exceeds the U.S. average by almost 30 percent. By 2030, rail traffic in Minnesota is projected to grow 25 percent to 40 percent.
- **Strained Track Capacity** – On Minnesota's most highly traveled routes, more than 70 trains pass through Minnesota communities each day. Increasing oil train traffic from North Dakota has reduced rail line capacity for Minnesota businesses and led to long backups in our communities, while motorists wait for trains to pass.
- **700 Miles at Risk** – Oil trains travel on than 700 miles of train track in the state to carry North Dakota crude oil to refineries on the East and Gulf Coasts. These routes travel through the heart of some of Minnesota's most populous communities, and pass through 683 crossings throughout the state. Each of these crossings increases the chance of a train/motor vehicle accident, while placing Minnesotans who must travel across the tracks at risk.
- **Deadly Accidents** – Oil train disasters have proven to be deadly. In December 2013, an oil train in Casselton, North Dakota exploded – forcing 1,400 residents to evacuate from the area. And in July 2013, an oil train from North Dakota derailed and exploded in Quebec, Canada – killing 42 people and destroying 30 buildings.

### Investments in Rail Crossings

- **Safety Improvements for Crude Oil Corridors** – Governor Dayton and Lt. Governor Smith have proposed \$32.5 million to improve safety along rail corridors where oil is shipped. These resources would be used for planning, engineering, administration and construction of highway-rail grade crossing improvement projects along rail corridors transporting crude oil and other hazardous materials.
- **Hiring Additional Rail Safety Inspectors** – The Governor and Lt. Governor have proposed \$466,000 to hire four additional rail safety inspectors plus a program manager to ensure railroads shipping oil and other hazardous materials are complying with safety regulations.
- **Improving Rail Safety Coordination** – Protecting Minnesotans from and responding to rail disasters is the responsibility of local first-responders, state government agencies, the federal government, and the railroads. To better coordinate prevention and response efforts, Governor Dayton and Lt. Governor Smith have proposed \$1.3 million to create an interagency Rail Safety team to coordinate Minnesota's rail safety improvement strategies.

### Rail and Pipeline Safety

- **Highway Rail Separations** – Governor Dayton and Lt. Governor Smith's Jobs Bill includes \$69.6 million for highway rail grade separations in Moorhead, Prairie Island and Coon Rapids.

- **Quiet Zones Grants** – To help improve safety and allow trains to run quietly, the Governor and Lt. Governor’s Jobs Bill would invest \$10 million in a quiet zone competitive grant program for local communities.
- **Upgrade Crossing Warning Devices** – Governor Dayton and Lt. Governor Smith’s Jobs Bill would invest \$5 million to replace obsolete railroad crossing signals across the state. These signals are 25 to 30 years old and frequently break down leading to major safety issues.
- **Rail and Pipeline Safety Training** – Governor Dayton and Lt. Governor Smith’s Jobs Bill would allocate \$3.5 million for the construction of an oil train derailment and pipeline safety training venue at the Camp Ripley Joint Emergency Response Training Center for large scale exercises for communities to train for response to potential rail or pipeline incidents.
- **Minneapolis Emergency Training Facility** – The Governor and Lt. Governor’s Jobs Bill would allocate \$2.5 million for the expansion of Minneapolis’s Emergency Operations Training Facility to provide repetitive training for first responders in rail, gas, and electrical emergencies.
- **New State Emergency Operations Center** – Governor Dayton and Lt. Governor Smith’s Jobs Bill would invest \$33.3 million to construct a new State Emergency Operations Center, to help to coordinate federal, state, and local response during disasters and other critical emergencies and serve as a training center for emergency operations.

## Rail Safety Investments – By the Numbers

<b>4,444 miles</b>	Miles of rail track used by Minnesota’s 20 railroads
<b>700 miles</b>	Oil trains use 700 miles of rail routes through Minnesota
<b>25 to 40 percent</b>	Expected growth in Minnesota rail traffic by 2030